

June 20, 1906

16

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

## Commencement Day

On Wednesday, June twentieth, occurred the Commencement exercises, followed by the Luncheon. The morning program was as follows:

### PROGRAM

March—"Ohio State University," - - - *Chas. T. Howe*

### Invocation

President William Oxley Thompson, D. D., LL. D.

Grand Opera Selection—"Carmen," - - - *Bizet*

### Annual Address

Professor Samuel Franklin Emerson, Ph. D.  
University of Vermont

Intermezzo—"Vision," - - - *Von Blon*

### Conferring of Degrees

Comic Opera Selection—"It Happened in Nordland," *Herbert*

### Benediction

March—"The Rose of Alhambra," - - - *Hosmer*

---

Music by  
The Zeigler-Howe Concert Orchestra

## Commencement Address

The Commencement address by Professor S. F. Emerson is as follows:

### MODERN SOCIETY—AN INTERPRETATION

*To know one's world*—that assuredly is necessary to comfortable residence in it. For the scholar, and for him who aspires to guide its thought and action, it is indispensable.

But it is impossible to understand the part without comprehending the whole. Our 20th century is the last link in an unbroken chain of centuries which have no numbered label. For us the line of cleavage begins not with the Christian era and the year one, B. C., but at that unchronicled point where the uncertain dividing line was drawn between Orient and Occident—not along the shores of the Aegean or the Hellespont but where the Syrian desert yields to the rich impregnating moisture of the mid-land sea. Throughout this unmeasured extent of time our Western Society has had a sufficiently distinctive career and is moving toward a definable goal. Its great stages are clearly marked. We cannot know our place in the universe nor adjust ourselves to our distinctive social problem without intelligent appreciation of that social movement which has shaped the course of what we call Western Society down to the present moment and which bears within itself the dim outline of a still unrealized goal. I cannot venture here even cursorily to characterize the nature of this movement, but a knowledge distinct though indeterminate of what is meant by the term Western Society I must assume in order that I may attempt the interpretation of existing social conditions.

Our distinctive social period began with Revolt. Revolt against an authority which had gathered up into itself all existing authorities human and divine and sealed them with a *supernatural sanction*. The classifications of the Philosopher, the decisions of jurists, the affections of the human soul, the aspirations of the saint as well as the decrees of emperors, the decretals of popes and the dogmas of inspiration—all were comprehended under this all-embracing supernatural sanction. It was a stupendous attempt to give to every human need and every spiritual aspiration a legiti-

mated mode of expression; to comprehend in one vast schematization the infinitely complex relations of a society practically without limits, and that not only for time but for eternity also. The grandeur of the conception commands our admiration. It was audacious, but it was not the audacity of folly, nor of vulgar ambition. It was the audacity of consecrated wisdom and preternatural prudence. What could be more self-evident than that human affairs require regulation! and that this regulation to be effective must extend to the thoughts and imaginations of the heart, must recognize the relations which bind man to man, must consider the varied expressions of human needs and provide for the satisfaction of man's deepest instincts and loftiest aspirations! It would be difficult to conceive of a social system which could accomplish this more effectively than it was actually accomplished by the great mediaeval system through the medium of its supernatural sanction. It anticipated the birth of the infant and imparted to its atmosphere the breath of an endless existence; it inoculated it with a sense of its potential worth as an effective antiseptic to that subtle poison which had honey-combed Classic Society, viz. Slavery. It inculcated industry by precept and example—but it carefully regulated the economic motive. It encouraged learning—but it wrote the textbooks. It stimulated thought and investigation—but it defined the boundaries of thought and held the master key of all philosophical problems. And if it set up an incontestable authority it mediated that authority by means of a pervasive impulse and a kindly solicitation which made its appeal to the helpless human soul irresistible. If it demanded an unquestioning submission to its assumed divine authority, it rewarded the obedient soul with such vistas of endless felicity that submission became the golden gateway to satisfying self-realization. If it subordinated to itself all human authority, it inculcated the much needed doctrine that no human authority exists for its own gratification, but only subject to a transcendent purpose, and that fidelity to that purpose is the measure of its right to be.

And for the operation of this stupendous social system it perfected a regulative machinery of marvellous ingenuity and surpassing effectiveness. No phase of human activity, no emotion of the soul, no legitimate ambition failed to secure its fitting recognition and its medium of expression. Society was *systematized*, *schematized*, *regulated*, *directed*. These terms convey to our ears

an accent of reproach which implies the condemnation of the whole mediaeval social system. But we must remember that the mediaeval system had to do at the same time with the debased possessors of a rich culture and a barbarous people of high native endowment. The task was not simply the elevation of a primitive people but the reclamation of a cultured but depraved society and in particular, to heal the festering sore of a slavery that involved the noblest and best of conquered peoples in a common degradation. To discipline the one and elevate the other, to raise from slavery to potential citizenship, to transform barbarians into the bearers of a consecrated culture—was an incomparable social achievement. It was the sheer lifting of the population of a continent out of the degradation of moral and physical servitude and out of barbarism. The fulcrum of this social leverage was the *supernatural sanction*; the clear attestation of a divine authority signed and sealed and transmitted by documentary deed. Under this sacred commission mediaeval society was conserved as a *preparation* for a fruition of eternal bliss. The justification of the system lies in the completeness of this *preparation*. The supreme goal is not the possession of earth, but assurance of the Hereafter. The ultimate social motive is not the enrichment of life nor the unfolding of capacity but the anticipation of celestial riches and celestial endowment. To the consecrated imagination of that age animated by this spirit of *preparation* for the supreme goal of human existence there opened a vista of surpassing attractiveness and the earthy substance became subdued to the foregleam of the spiritual vision and the beatitudes of the celestial sphere amply compensated for the rudeness of terrestrial conditions.

Now if against the background of this mediaeval system, with its all subduing supernatural sanction, we place the outline of our modern social system, there can scarcely be conceived a more striking contrast. The whole scheme of minute regulation of thought and action our modern society repudiates in disgust. It has proclaimed largely and loudly its liberty to think and to act. For the painful preparation for celestial felicity it has substituted the largest immediate satisfaction of all its impulses and the realization of the fullest measure of individual well-being. And the supernatural sanction which subdued mediaeval opposition to unquestioning submission has lost alike its attraction and its terror. With the exception of the mediaeval ecclesiastical institution, ranked indiffer-



ently as one amongst many similar institutions, or treated as a venerable reliquary, Modern Society has repudiated with scorn the products of mediaeval thought and the institutions in which Mediaeval Society embodied its activity. The things which Mediaeval Society rejected or subordinated Modern Society has exalted and glorified and that celestial anticipation which constituted the very life blood of Mediaeval Society, Modern Society tolerates as a pleasing fiction or at most an innocent illusion. This attitude of Modern Society I have called the attitude of *Revolt*.

But now the Modern social movement did not begin with Revolt, but with Protest. There was no idea of repudiating the treasured store of Mediaeval thought and sentiment, but rather of appropriating and utilizing it. There was indignation at abuses, shared by all noble minds. There was, too, impatience of restraint upon thought and the politicians were restive under the imposed subordination of their pretensions to a superior authority. But there was no thought of revolt against the mediaeval social system. It was in fact deemed essential to existence. Without its chart and compass society would be adrift upon a tempestuous social sea. There was indeed an eager earnestness to experience here and now the foretaste at least of that felicity which the church postponed to the future. The protest was against the prolonged postponement. It was in fact a demand for reality. Earnest souls longed with a consuming passion for the realization, by anticipation at least, of that peace and satisfaction stored in the celestial reservoir. The saint was weary with his vigils. The counted litanies gave back no answer. The very spirit of anticipation which the church had diligently fostered demanded with an irresistible urgency to be brought into direct and immediate contact with the source of life for which it famished. But this demand was in fact a blow aimed at the corner stone of the Mediaeval social schema. Its social regulation, its carefully articulated doctrinal system, its ritual and spiritual exercises were based on the presumption of a preparation for, but not a realization of, celestial blessedness, and this was involved in that dread supernatural sanction, the ultimate rationale of the whole system, and which would be invalidated by the possibility of forestalling in time the awards of eternity. The church rejected the demand. It was the custodian of a sacred treasure which would be endangered by compliance. The authoritative guardianship of this treasure was contested by the Reformers. They demanded

immediate access to it, and their protest was formulated against the denial of this demand.

It seems incredible that the Revolutionary movement which has swept so resistlessly over the western world and has dominated so pervasively the thought and life of the last four centuries could have been started by this simple protest of the Reformers. But in reality the whole question of *authority* was grounded upon that protest. By an extraordinary conspiracy of social forces the authority perfected by the Roman Empire had been transformed, consecrated, deified and elevated into the sphere of the Supernatural. The Mediaeval social system was the extension of this supreme supernatural authority to the social and intellectual activities of men in the name of the new religion which had appeared in Palestine. The question of its authority on a vital matter of faith raised the whole question of authority human and divine and laid bare the foundation upon which the splendid structure of Mediaeval society rested. The Reformers did not perceive this. It was not their intent. They revered the system which encompassed them and had nourished within them the yearning for vital contact with the sources of life and truth. About the content of this truth there was no controversy. Their preconceptions, the accepted foundations of their faith, their submission to the supreme supernatural authority were shared with those whose authority in one detail, they called in question. They regarded the issue as a matter of policy or of ecclesiastical organization. In reality they called in question the validity of any authority which does not approve itself to human reason and the inner witness of the spirit. In the Reformers protest, therefore, there was wrapped up the germ of a social revolution which threatened the subversion of *Authority* itself. When this became apparent, it was a simple matter to arm collective Europe against the enemies of the established order and of society. A century of conflict deepened the antagonism. Bitter resentment against the overturners of the world's faith threatened their extermination. Re-established authority asserted its power arbitrarily and arrogantly. Reform was hurried into Revolution. The eighteenth century furnished it nutriment, rationale, and unique opportunity.

Thus the movement of Revolution set in resistlessly. The spirit of Revolt against Authority has entered into the arteries of Modern Society. The innocent protest of the Reformers has been

transformed into the toxine of Revolt and has infected the blood of our forbears and ourselves. This spirit of Revolt has concealed itself under specious phrasing; resistance of oppression; overthrow of despotism; freedom of speech; freedom of conscience. It has written in glowing letters its watchwords of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. But its true nature of Revolt against Authority has never failed to disclose itself. In its full tide of success it has overturned all constituted authority. It has levelled every distinction of place and position not only, but of grace and culture as well. It has overturned thrones not only, but the foundations of faith, of order, of morality as well. It has in its excess even sought to resolve society into its ultimate units and to dissolve every tie which binds man to man and mankind to Deity. It has inflated these solitary social units with a measureless self-assertion and in its representatives exhibited a titanic egoism.

But there has also been exhibited by the Revolutionary movement an energy, a restless activity, a wealth of resource, a devotion to the cause, an abandon, and an eagerness for martyrdom of which the Mediaeval world never conceived. Nevertheless the leaders of Revolution have been unable to restrain or direct the mighty forces which they have called into being. Under the Euphemism of Liberty there has been set up such a tyranny as the pervasive sweep of Mediaeval authority never compassed. Freedom of thought has emancipated even the logic of thinking. Equality has meant the rejection of all excellence and of all virtue. The unrestrained expression of those elemental, self-centered impulses, which discipline aims to control and society to transform, the complete resolution of all social relations and the return to that primitive savagery out of which the long eons have slowly dragged imbruted man—this in its extreme has been the professed gospel of the genuine Revolutionist. And this slavery to an abstract formula legitimates for him the destruction of the most beneficent of rulers, the savage slaughter of the most innocent and most gracious of beings whom the accident of birth or popular choice has invested with the temporary possession of lawful primacy. This is the essence of the gospel of Revolution. It is the bald logic of individualism; the absorption of the universe in the inflated ego. Our Modern Society has inhaled copiously this spirit of Revolution—its opposition to authority; its implicit lawlessness; its measureless self-assertion. It manifests itself in unexpected forms; in the riot



of industrial conflict, in the tyranny of capital and also of labor, in the arrogant assertion of racial superiority, in the prostitution of statute, and tariff and municipal control, in the violation of sacred trusts, in simulated public service, in the manipulation of state machinery and even of the social fabric itself for private ends. It invades even our institutions of learning, the schedule of studies, the class exercise, examinations and athletic contests. It infests our journals, our magazines and our literature; it determines the speed of the motor car and it is chiefly responsible for that demoralizing mania which transforms honest industry into reckless speculation.

The Revolutionary movement bears within itself the seed of social dissolution. This has been repeatedly made manifest in the past and now again in Russia and San Domingo. It was inevitable therefore that Revolution should be followed by Reaction. The excesses of the Revolutionists; the dissolving of their resplendent promises in mist; the veiled tyranny of abstract dogma have enabled authority to regain ascendancy and to establish its rejected dominion more firmly in conviction if not in affection. Re-established authority has guarded more carefully the avenues of approach, the instruction of the schools, the promulgation of ideas and the expression of sentiment. It has drawn a boundary about the field of investigation, has formulated the grooves of thought and the channels of religious sentiment. It has prescribed beliefs and sealed with official approval political and scientific doctrines. It has entered determinatively the sphere of economics, regulated the cultivation of the soil, the production of mines and manufactories, the output of distilleries and the transportation of merchandise. It has thus sought to bring under autocratic regulation the whole spiritual industrial and religious activity of man in order to guard against the disaster of seductive revolution. It has thus placed bonds upon the free spirit of man, has inculcated servility of soul, has dulled the joy of life, has taken elasticity out of the footstep and the glow out of hope and aspiration, and in defence of this benumbing regulation of thought and feeling and action Reactionary Authority has dared to plead that vast Supernatural Sanction against whose decision there could be no appeal.

Between these two extremes of Revolution and Reaction our modern society has oscillated. Now with exuberant burst of enthusiasm it has raised the shout of Revolution and again in bitter



disappointment it has returned to the yoke of reactionary authority. This oscillating movement has carried with it the activity of our whole society. The thought of our age, religious and literary as well as scientific and philosophic, political speculation and economic theory have reflected this alternation between Revolution and Reaction. The multiplication of new religious sects has alternated with the resumed sway of the metaphysical creed and the surrender to an infallible authority. Our literature has alternated between the microscopic examination of the passions of the common man—the very common man, and the glorification of faith and chivalry. Our philosophy has passed to and fro between sensations and intuition between laws of association and the categorical imperative, and our economic theorists have exchanged the gospel of freedom for the blessing of state-regulation.

There has been without doubt activity, abundant activity, but there has been little social progress—incessant movement between the poles of thought but little advance beyond them: excessive motility is the hall-mark of our age but little growth.

And the last century seems to have settled down to the conviction that it was doomed to remain permanently impaled upon the horns of this dilemma and has adjusted itself to the conditions of perennial oscillation. It has formulated its constitutions, its conventions and compacts. It has extolled compromise as the quintessence of political and social wisdom. It has balanced its contending forces. It has created its arbiter between recognized rights and equipped its machinery of Justice upon the presumption of the inevitable collision of interests. Thus the modern constitutional state has sought to establish an equilibrium between Revolution and Reaction, preserve the *status quo*, and keep the peace between these two social agitators who have so long disturbed the repose of Modern Society.

The last century opened with a boundless faith in the virtue of the constitutional compact. Oppressive Authority and Revolutionary tyranny were both to be terminated. Peace and participation in national self-management were to march hand in hand and between the constitutional states a perpetual league of friendship was to be formed. A new era had dawned upon Western Society. The violent passions which had burned so disastrously in the 17th century were to learn to express themselves in parliamentary language and to extend to each other within the Senate House

the courtesies of debate. The lion and the tiger were expected to remain docile each on his respective side of the chamber. The new era of Western Society was to be inaugurated with universal constitution making. How grievously was the faith of the constitution makers shaken after 1789! Constitution succeeded constitution in tumultuous confusion. Under the aegis of the constitution the despot of Europe ascended the Consulate. Still the constitutional faith survived. It crossed the seas to Mexico and South America, stamped out beneath the heel of the arrogant allies, discredited, spurned by prostrate peoples, it still exercised a strange magic over men. It revived in 1830. It waxed strong in 1848 and in 1870 it had become a young giant able to dictate the political status of every state of Europe and at the present moment faith in the Constitution is stirring the black soil of Russia as it has never been stirred before.

But the ardent hopes which greeted the constitution makers of Western Europe at the beginning of the 19th century stand in marked contrast with those addressed to the constitution makers of Eastern Europe at the opening of the 20th century. A century of constitutional experience has chilled the ardor. Experience is a hard tutor. The expectation of a permanent adjustment of relations between Authority and Revolt is much weakened by the facts which face constitutionalists. They are deeply convinced that constitutions afford no panacea for social ills. Already the Revolutionists are proclaiming their worthlessness and the upholders of Authority are essentially at one with them. The Constitution has doubtless had a function to perform in the social adjustment of our century. It has proved an efficient medium of compromise and there are periods when compromise is sorely needed. It has made revolution more difficult and reaction less possible, but there is a growing conviction of its social inadequacy. It is an admirable contrivance for bringing to expression social needs and social discontent, but it is wholly unfitted to serve as the medium for gathering up, co-ordinating, and giving direction to the collective force of the community. Besides it lends itself so readily to become the instrument of despotic authority or revolutionary tyranny; beneath its ample folds the hords of political chicanery and economic plunder find such generous protection that it is fast becoming discredited. It is daily more evident that the constitution is unsuited to become the medium of social advancement. Moreover the social

forces of Modern Society have become so titanic, they have secured in the press and telegraph such ready means of expression; they sweep with such terrific energy over seas and continents that the constitutional compromises of the past century afford little capacity for resistance and still less for guidance. Modern Society will need to form for itself a more perfect instrument for the expression of the social will, the organizer of its forces and the conserver of its interests. At best a state of social equilibrium can only be temporary. It may serve to hold in balance for a moment antagonistic forces but it has no power to fuse them into unity. Already this equilibrium is showing signs of violent disturbance. So long as the representatives of vested interests by means of superior intelligence and superior discipline actually counterbalanced the unorganized forces of Revolt, the system of checks and balances had its value. But that time has already passed and the gathering of insurgents against the existing social order in ranks and regiments over vast stretches of social area is full of menace to our social equilibrium.

The 19th century system of social compromise has failed to solve the problem of Modern Society. What promise has the 20th century for the future? One thing I think may be said with certainty, viz.: the four centuries of our Modern Society—the 15th century of Revolt and violent Reaction; the 17th century of bitter contest; the 18th century of Revolution and the 19th century of Constitutional Compromise have been preparatory to reconstruction rather than constructive. They are deficient in that totality of conception; that elevation of social ideal; that all-embracing and all-subduing social atmosphere; that pervasive impelling force working from within conformity to the type, and in that social gravitation which holds the revolving communities to their circuits—things essential to a genuine society. A genuine society is characterized by an implicit completeness. It holds its universe within itself. It is a self-constituting and self-sustaining center of unity. It contains its own deity and celestial sphere as parts of one whole. It is a kingdom of God, uniting heaven and earth in one organic totality. All this lay in germ and promise in the beginning of our Christian society. That promise has yet to be kept. It constitutes the very core of what we call Western Society.

Of all the Christian centuries it may be said they are rather preparatory than constructive. They have called into being two



sides of the social problem—the Universal with its measureless Authority and the Individual with his measureless assumption. They have brought the two factors face to face and established between them an unstable equilibrium, but have not brought them into intimate relation, have not united them. This is the problem.

Authority and Revolt, Revolution and Reaction are after all but two sides of one process. Not two social forces but two phases of one force. In their bitterest contention they are in reality struggling for a method of union. They belong together and the existence of each would be jeopardized by the disappearance of the other. This age of constitutional compromise in which we stand has this justification, not that it has in itself any element of permanence, much less of finality, but that it serves to bring the contestants into amicable relations, to postpone the strife for a moment and by this means to furnish the opportunity for the emergence of constructive social principle.

Our revolutionary temper repudiates hotly the whole Mediaeval age of Authority but we can not so lightly dismiss this venerable social ancestor. The Mediaeval atmosphere is with us yet, when we least suspect it. We breathe it in our prayers and sing it in our hymns. In our deepest moods the wings of its aspiration bear our souls aloft. Its sweep of universality imparts prospective still to our vision and the loftiness of its goal is for us still the motor spring of progress. We need still and shall ever need the essential thing for which the Mediaeval ages stood—the *essential thing*. We do *not* need its painfully punctilious Supernatural Authority, but we do need with an urgency to which no superlative can do violence to *convert that Supernatural Authority into a Vital Principle*. I am tempted to pause here; to close with these words for in them is contained the pith and substance of our Social movement from the beginning to the present. Not the bare authority from whatever source divine or human; not the external command, nor the formulated precept from any source natural or supernatural is what Society needs but a perennial fountain of life springing afresh in the soul of each social unit—an inner impelling power imparting elasticity and energy and abounding vitality through all the arteries of the social body.

It cannot be denied that Mediaeval Authority did its work. It disciplined the rude elements of Mediaeval Society. They needed discipline. They would not have responded to impulse. The Auth-

oritative word, the sharp command, implicit obedience, the mechanism of law and order and regulation; society must pass thro' its mechanical stages. They have their social justification. But now to make a fetish of Mechanism; to deify command; to exalt rule and regulation and passive obedience to supremacy and to inculcate for rite and ceremony a reverence bordering on superstition—this is to turn the instruments of discipline into bonds of the human spirit and to transform discipline itself into servitude. Then we are not far from that singular delusion which regards this perpetuated servitude as the apex of social perfectness. Revolt is then not far distant. Some fiery soul will slip its fetters and society itself is soon aflame. Then we shall hear the hoarse cry of hate, the sound of demolition, the uproarious elevation of new deities, the enthronement of Liberty and Reason in their garish decorations and the setting up in their name of a tyranny far more cruel than the sanctified servitude from which they fled. And then will come Reaction. Authority will recover its sway but will not learn wisdom. The new oppression will be more grinding than the former and the way will be prepared for Revolt once more.

Is this then but a blind battle of blind elemental social forces? Is there a meaning beneath it all? Or shall we at once agree with our nature philosophers that here in the midst of Society the savage law of nature is asserting itself and the dark tragedy of the forest is repeating itself in the world of spirit? I cannot believe it.

That which unconsciously animates the Revolutionist to such reckless abandon is the craving for a vital principle with which he may feel himself in inner harmony and to which he may surrender the guidance of his life in order thereby to attain the completest realization of his spirit's powers and capacities. The evidence of this is overwhelming. It is enunciated in the forefront of the program of Reform. Justification by Faith means immediate relation between the individual spirit and the vital source of all spiritual activity. It is intended in the doctrine of Inherent Rights and in the crude effort to rescue the individual from every external authority and turn him back upon himself as the sole source of social guidance. It flames forth in the flamboyant parade of Freedom and Liberty. Beneath these extravagantly decorated abstractions there was the suggestion of a profound truth which gave them their whole validity. Yes, even in the enthronement of the individual in his legal, or political, or economic right over

against collective society there is this germ of truth that the effectiveness of all control, legal and social, has its vitality in the assent of the individual, and the right to assent implies the right to dissent.

Now if I do not mistake profoundly the distinctive feature of our Western Society is the slow emergence of this *Vital Principle*, dimly foreshadowed, first in the inadequate form of Authority and again reflected in the still inadequate form of Revolt, but in reality involved in each and giving to each its validity.

My proposition is then that this Vital Principle is disclosing itself in these days more distinctly than ever before and that the present is the unique preparation for its decisive operation. I am confirmed in this belief by the recent demonstration of a remarkable natural law—a law old as society itself and anticipated with some distinctness by Greek speculators, but attaining demonstrable verification only in the last half of the previous century—I refer to the law of *Organic Development*. At last we have conclusive evidence that the universe of nature is one organic whole, that from the lowest form of life up to the highest one law obtains; that in this vast complex no one individual stands off in solitary independence but that each is interwoven with others in a marvelous network of interrelations which imply and provide for the existence of all. Thus over against that struggle for existence which contributes to diversification there is going on no less intensely the struggle for the organic whole which makes for one structured unity. The significance of this great law it is as yet too early to premise. But already it establishes in the world of nature such a harmony of relations, it solves so many enigmas, it unites into one process so completely the centuries which have vanished and left behind their fossil mementoes, and it points forward such a dizzy distance into a future of continuous organic development, that we are wholly unable to compass with our thought its immeasurable significance. One thing is certain—henceforth our thinking must become *organic*. The hard and barren formulae which we have learned to recite and to defend; the innate ideas and categorical imperatives along with their near social relations; inherent rights and inalienable privileges will have to be resolved and recombined with the living bonds of a comprehensive *organic* social philosophy.

There is another product of the last half century—a veritable scientific discovery; of utmost significance to the sociologist. I refer to that minute organism called the cell. This physiological



unit of the living organism is itself a complete organic entity; microscopically minute it still discharges the complement of functions of a living organism. The processes of nutrition, growth, reproduction are constantly going on in these minute organisms, which together in related groups constitute the various organs of the living body just as they go on in the animal or human body itself. Each in its place is discharging its organic functions as effectively as if it were a wholly independent and separate organism, and yet it is bound to the body by an essential bond of intricate interrelations. This remarkable example of organic relations is certain to have important influence on social conceptions. It is difficult to imagine a more suitable illustrations of the social organism. If we could imagine the individual cell endowed with intelligence to understand and give conscious expression to the impulses which center in itself and the impulses which connect it with the organic whole we should have such a revelation of the organic principle, fusing dependence and independence and harmonizing apparently antagonistic impulses as would enable us to picture to ourselves, as it is impossible now, a veritable social organism.

The working of an organic principle, old as Society itself, but only very slowly coming to recognition and only recently securing for itself a field of decisive operation, may be discovered in most unexpected places. It discloses itself in the unity and order to which our scientific investigators, in spite of the exclusive cultivation each of his separate field, reluctantly bear testimony. It is seen in the undesigned harmony which brings into singular unity the minute researches of historical students in the most widely scattered field. It is seen in that deeper and richer interpretation which is being given to the nature of the State and the functions of the local community. And it is not impossible for the attentive observer to discover evidences of the operation of a principle differing essentially from the exercise of authority and from the assertion of individual right—an organic principle, working a subtle transformation of the spirit of our politics and of our economics, determining policies neither by counting votes nor by weighing them but by the genuine conviction of a genuine public opinion and directing industry neither by statute nor by commission but by the genuine conviction that individual advantage can be permanently assured only thro' the advantage of all and that the largest private gain is inextricably interwoven with public benefit. And perhaps

most significant of all is the recent formation of a new intellectual instrument as if designed for the discovery and disclosure of this organic principle to whose presence the traditional mind is fore-closed. It is the joint product of science and philosophy—not Science alone for science requires that the object of investigation fill the field of vision exclusively—but the *Scientific Temper* which sees *things* not only but things in their *relations*, which gathers the results of investigation into rational coherence, which finds reality not in things but in the relation of things and through the union of relations makes possible a living unity of thought.

And I conclude that it is possible to anticipate in the not distant future the progressive conversion of our creeds and formularies and venerable supernatural sanctions into vital social forces, the translation of our compacts and constitutions, our statutory commands and our moral precepts into living principles and the progressive gathering up of all those vitallized elements consciously and determinatively into one great movement of organic social development.

And for effecting this social transformation upon which our Modern age is assuredly entering I know of no institution so well fitted as the University. It is the only institution of Modern Society which is wholly emancipated from bondage to Authority and from the tyranny of abstract formularies. It has no reverence for the letter of the law. Creeds and conventions, the traditions of jurists and canonists, constitutions and catechisms are alike subject to its impartial analysis. Here if anywhere may go on undisturbed the process of converting the precepts of morality, of religion, art, literature, philosophy, science into vital principles to be incorporated with the students spirit and not crammed into his cranium. The existing schedule of studies composed of little Latin and less Greek and a smattering of the sciences must give place to a pulsing spiritual power which will unite instructor and pupils into the most vital of spiritual communities and from these halls there will flow forth from year to year in increasing volume a stream of spiritual energy which will ultimately transform our mechanical society into a veritable social organism.

To those young people who go forth to-day from the narrow community of scholarly minds into the larger community of Society in general, I must be permitted to address a word. Do not consider yourselves educated, nor even on the way to education, until you

have discovered the vital principle of the study you have pursued, in whatever department; until you have pressed thro' the crust of formula and precept and the living soul of the subject shall have seized you and made you its willing servant. You may still live in the servitude of Mediaeval Authority, most men, even intellectual men, do so still. You may raise the shout of revolt; that will be at least spectacular and afford a certain kind of gratifying intellectual effervescence. But you are entitled to drink from the perennial fountain of the spirit's life, to vitalize your souls with a growing appreciation of every noble thought and thing and give it expression in your social relations. You may, in a degree but faintly conceived by you, join in the distinctive work of the genuine scholar—that most urgently needed work—of transforming and elevating our Modern Society.

---

At the close of the Annual Address, the President of the University conferred degrees on the largest class ever graduated. ~~Two~~ hundred and fifty-four persons received degrees and professional certificates at this time.